man Baptists have been severe on us on many occasions, but for all that retaliation is not justifiable. Jesus teaches us that we should give up all but truth, honesty and our faith to those who even will impose upon others.

THE OHIO STATE CONVENTION.

Bro. Brown's article written in No. 29, in compliance with a resolution of the late Sunday School Convention at Fairview, Ohio, deserves every consideration. This annual convention will not merely be a Sunday School Convention, but a church convention, and will include every department of church work. It can be made the means of bringing greater harmony in the different churches. We will, by these annual gatherings, have the advantage of becoming better acquainted with each other, and will do much toward cementing us together. Without these meetings, and of course coming together in a Christian, unselfish spirit, we will only be in reality a sisterhood of separate churches without that unity of purpose that will enable us to accomplish the good expected of us.

I am sorry for one thing, that the churches in the Northern part of the state were not better represented. It looks as if Southern Ohio was going to monopolize the convention. But the truth is there were not any representatives from the north to give the convention an invitation. Those who generally attend these conventions may remember that it was through my individual effort, a few years ago, at Fair Haven that Southern Ohio was taken in, and the convention brought down here among us. Louisville, Black River, Liberty, Mount Zion, Ankneytown, and we may add Fair Haven, with the exception of Bro. Brown, who represented Bear Creek, and probably some others were not represented. This is rather a drawback on our conventions, and prevents us from having them in different parts of the state, which would be so much the best for the cause in general, and the local churches where they are held in particular.

THE SUPPER CONTROVERSY.

We are having quite a controversy over the supper. Controversies on important subjects cannot help but be for good. I am not among the number that lament these discussions. Truth will never suffer by investigation. The Lord's Supper is one of the important ordinances of the Brethren Church. It is so acknowledged and practiced by all the congregations of the brotherhood. And it is quite interesting to read the different views of the brethren concerning it. Of course, we expect nothing else, but that there will be different opinions. For instance some of us may be advocates of open communion, or rather we may be in favor of allowing others, besides members of our own particular church, to be welcome at the Lord's tables. Then again others may advocate their preference for observing the ordinance privately, or in other words, not making a public anouncement of it. So others again advocate simplicity in the meal, and are opposed to making great preparations and display in supplying the table. So again others favor a warm meal, while others prefer a cold meal. And as the last few weeks have developed some would advocate the use of knives, forks and plates, while others would sooner dispense with them. These differences, however, are merely preferences. I am glad, that the Brethren have sufficient interest in these matters to give then preferences and advocate them.

So long as these discussions are maintained in a Christian spirit, and we will not consider every body wrong who differs with us, the church will be benefited. It is a fatal mistake for us to denounce those who hold other ideas than our own as being wrong. These matters are merely preferences. It would be just as unreasonable for me to assert that those who do not eat what I eat, and do not have the table spread with the utensils that I have, that they are not eating a supper or a dinner as to affirm that a supper cannot be a supper without knives and forks.

Now with all due deference to those who may differ from me, I have been present when the Lord's supper has been observed in all its variations, and my individual preference has been in favor of simplicity in the preparation, and where knives, forks and plates have not been used. I enjoyed the feast under these circumstances, because from actual experience, there has been such an absence of the slightest noise, that the most sensitive mind would not be disturbed in its spiritual meditations. Necessarily there is a little noise of the knives and forks coming in contact with the plates that cannot be prevented; and where there are one hundred communicants or more, it is very prominent, and the extreme stillness of the congregation only makes it the more remarkable and noticeable. We have experienced the difference, and surely no one could blame me for my preference, or that I would publicly announce my preferences, giving the reasons therefore. Others again are just as enthusiastic and partial for some other particular method. And we consider them perfectly right and justifiable in giving vent to their views. But I consider it entirely wrong that any should be blamed for prefering one of these methods to another.

This is all there is in the knife and fork controversy. Often at our house, we do not even cook our evening meal, but partake of what may be left from other meals. This too, in more than one instance has been eaten without knives, forks and plates. How often is this done at picnics, or when we are on a journey or at work. We all generally are guided by circumstances in the minor details. Taste, inclination or preference, may have much to do in bringing us to a decision in what we shall use at our meals.

As to what we shall eat or use at meals depends upon where it is and what it may be. At our homes, where we are in the habit of eating daily, we have all the utensils and material at hand which we generally make use of. But in a church where meals are only eaten once or twice a year, it is not, in my estimation at least, to be expected that we should have the same material as we would at home. To many minds it appears as if we were turning a spiritual feast into a carnal one, and the very principles for which the advocates of a full set of table utensils are contending, to the minds of those who differ from them are violated.

No matter what may be said to the contrary, the gospel, history and our own experience has taught us that a too strict adherence to a particular method may kill the design, and the great lesson lost in our anxiety to cling to minor details. In clinging to the letter, the spirit may be lost sight of. The Lord himself even denounced the Pharisees for this. We are but human, and cannot we also fall into the same error? The tendency is in this direction. The Roman Catholic, and probably some other churches may be living instances of this.

We often in these controversies hear the expression "the established doctrines and practices of the church." I may reasonably ask who established them? If they were established by the Lord Jesus Christ, then we must give them our hearty support and obedience. The Brethren church, thank God, acknowledge none other. But if these "practices" were established by the authority of a few elders, or annual meeting, we owe them no greater respect than any other man-made institution. No doubt many of us have allowed a life-long acquaintance with certain "usages and practices" to take such a strong hold of us that it is hard to separate them from the teachings of the Master himself; in fact they are on a par. I can readily make every allowance and respect the man and his preferences, but I must not be blamed if I do not adopt those usages which I have never even been taught.

Again and again I would repeat the assertion I made use of in a former article that "It is not so much what we feed the stomach on as what the soul retains, that makes the feast a success." If this assertion is of the semi-infidel kind, I would be glad to be enlightened where the infidel tendency is. For God knows I would avoid all infidel tendencies as I would a rattlesnake. The opposite to this would be that "It does matter what we feed the stomach on, and not what the soul retains." Who will affirm such an assertion? I hope no member of the Brethren church. Whatever we may think, on the principle contained in my sentence quoted above, depends the success of our feast. As for the similitude used in the criticism of that sentence, that "this is the same old semi-infidel argument that has been hurled against immersion for centuries. 'It is not the amount of water. Oh, no, a drop is as good as an ocean. Oh certainly, it is the spiritual baptism in the heart that is the essential part.'" In all fairness, as a Christian man criticizing another, is this similitude a fair one? The quantity of water makes no difference so that it is a baptism—an immersion. A stream that you can step across if it is enough to baptize you is as good as the Atlantic Ocean. The insignificant, muddy, dashing Jordan was as good as the Mediteranean Sea. And then if the spiritual baptism is lacking the water baptism availeth nothing. "Except a man be born of water *and of the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the knigdom of God." The same principle must be applied to the supper. The quantity of food on the table is not what is going to constitute the Lord's Supper. Who is going to judge of the sufficiency? So that it is a supper who has a right to pass judgment on it? I claim that no man has a right to pass judgment as to the sufficiency. As to eating at that sacred meal, to look over the table for criticism, or to eat to the satisfying of the appetite as I would at home, is one of the last things that would enter my mind. I am merely giving my individual experience. Quantity, in my mind, (remember this is but an individual opinion) is a small matter at this feast. The Lord instituted the wine and bread as emblems of his body and blood. He did not tell us how much we should eat and drink. Yet custom has made it a law that a mere sip of wine and a small piece of bread is sufficient. More than that would be considered a terrible breach of decorum and good judgment. Now the bread and wine are emblems, and is not the supper an emblem, and according to the same rule, we should use good judgment and taste. I surely cannot consider it either good judgment or taste to sit down and eat what we would call a hearty meal at such a time. This may be called sickly sentimentality or anything else, but as long as I live I shall adhere to it. The better part of my nature, reasoning from the word of God, and my best judgment has brought me to this decision.

As an emblem of that grander feast in eternity I love the feast, and expect to adhere to it as long as I have an opportunity to observe it, and thus brighten up my hope by anticipating the eternal feast. The peculiar and even hushed clatter of the knives and forks, and I say this with all due respect, and the process of eating a "full meal," in one of my nervous and sensitive disposition, would not aid my meditations in trying to realize the glory and blessing of the great supper of eternity.

I am too glad that we have the privilege of worshipping according to the teachings of Jesus. It is a matter of rejoicing to know that we enjoy membership in a body that will take the word of God in its simplest sense. What a grand privilege it is that we have no usages and customs to stumble over, but that we can follow Jesus and him alone. The year of Jubilee is surely come. No conclave of bishops, elders or priests have any right to interpret the word of God for us. With such a grand array of privileges, and an earnest desire to do the will of God, irrespective of the opinions of men, there is no fear of drifting away from truth. Let our greatest ambition be to follow Jesus rather than the usages and customs of a past age.

EDWARD MASON.

Masontown, Pa.

The Middle Run church of which I wrote some time since in items from Masontown was dedicated July 22nd. The members have a good house, well finished and nicely furnished. Being poor, they worked hard to establish it, and there yet remains an indebtedness of about $75, which I hope they soon will be able to liquidate. Their Sisters' Endeavor purchased the table and pulpit chairs.

These people knew nothing of Brethren principles until Bro. Geo. W. DeBolt was invited into their midst to preach the gospel. He soon built up a fair sized congregation, and commenced an erection for public worship. It was nearly completed when he received a call from Carleton, which he accepted, thinking he could dedicate this house before leaving. The time proved too short, and he was obliged to fulfill his engagements in Nebraska. Since then the building had received little attention until about two months ago, when the committee agreed with Bro. J. B. Wampler, of Blanco, Pa., to put it in readiness for dedication. 'Twas handsomely done for $150, and as proof of their gratitude Bro. Wampler was requested to preach the dedicatory sermon.

The church was beautifully decorated by appreciative friends, and on Sunday was overfilled with attentive listeners. Bro. J. D. Gans made the opening prayer, and Bro. A. J. Sterling the closing. The preaching was instructive, and delivered in Bro. Wampler's earnest way. His text is in 2nd Chronicles, 7 : 5. "So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God." After appropriately talking from different heads, including behavior in a house of worship, he impressively closed thus: "With these thoughts upon our minds, we dedicate this house unto God, the Eternal Father. We dedicate it to Jesus Christ, to the memory of his love, to the celebration of his divine nature, to the preaching of that truth which he sealed with his own blood. We dedicate it to the Holy Spirit, to the sanctifying influence of God. We dedicate it to prayers and praises, which we trust will be continued and perfected in heaven. We dedicate it to social worship, to Christian intercourse, to the communion of saints. Here may heart meet heart, and here may man meet God. In this place may the song of praise, the ascription of gratitude, the sigh of the penitence, the prayer for grace, ascend as holy incense to heaven. May this be a sacred spot where God will meet and bless his people."

M. M. STERLING.

OUR CHURCH.

Send in your short items. They are always interesting.

Bro. S. E. Shook left last Thursday for a few days visit at his old home in Darke Co.

From obituaries to be published next week we learn that Sister Ridenour, wife of Bro. James Ridenour, has passed to rest; also Harvey L. Raynor.

Another minister was received by baptism into the Brethren Church, in the Bethel congregation, on the 22 of July. May he prove an ornament to the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Bro. J. C. Ewing now turns up in Jacksonville, Ala. Verily it is difficult to tell where Bro. E. will turn up. We have sent a number of Hymnody orders after him. This will explain to those concerned.

Huntington, Ind.—We the Brethren of this place will hold a harvest and thanksgiving meeting in the Grove near the Bracken church, August 19, 1888. A basket dinner will be served, and a good time is expected. Everybody far and near is invited. By order of the Brethren.

S. P. STEVENS, Pastor.

"I was troubled with Catarrh for over two years. I tried various remedies and was treated by a number of physicians, but received no benefit until I began to take Ayer's Sarsaparilla. A few bottles of this medicine cured me."—Jessie M. Boggs, Holman's Mills, N. C.